



Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

LISA PINO, M.A., J.D.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

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Dear Colleague:

I am happy to announce that New York State's third annual PrEP Aware Week will take place October 25-31, 2021. PrEP Aware Week has become an important time for community organizations, clinics, schools and people from all walks of life to come together to raise awareness about HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). I urge you to participate by offering PrEP Aware Week events, providing PrEP referrals and PrEP services, and educating everyone in your community about PrEP. You can find the latest information about PrEP Aware Week posted on the campaign webpage at www.prepforsex.org.

New York's PrEP Aware Week has gained recognition nationally as a best practice. The purpose of PrEP Aware Week is to provide culturally relevant messages to individuals whose life circumstances place them at elevated risk for HIV, including: cis-gender gay men and MSM of color; transgender and gender non-conforming people; women; young people; and people who use drugs. Ensuring broad and equitable access to PrEP is a key component of the AIDS Institute's health equity focus.

Building on individualized PrEP for HIV prevention and sexual health, the theme of *PrEP Aware Week, 2021* is: "My PrEP." The 2021 PrEP Aware Week Social Media Toolkit will feature eight community ambassadors selected by grassroots organizations and PrEP clinics discussing their "PrEP Story" and why PrEP is significant to them. Examples of ambassador statements include "My PrEP, My Freedom", "My PrEP, My Control" and "My PrEP, My Intention". This theme provides a broad umbrella for reaching all New Yorkers with tailored messages that will speak to them as individuals and members of overlapping, diverse communities.



Attached is a list of possible activities for PrEP Aware Week, including: ideas for virtual and in-person events; using the *PrEP Aware Week* Social Media Toolkit upon its release in early October; tailoring educational messages about PrEP for your community; and more. I ask that all AIDS Institute-funded community partners discuss their plans for participating in PrEP Aware Week with their contract manager.

Thank you for joining the effort to make PrEP Aware Week 2021 the best yet.

Sincerely,

Johanne E. Morne, MS
Director
AIDS Institute